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ALL day amid the greedy multitude
I stand alert, intent to take and hold,
Yet keep from stain an honor still un-
sold

Despite seductions plausible or crude,
And count it gain if I by chance elude
The pitfalls of a world in evil old,
Whose snares as subtle grow as manifold,
And see the day without defeat conclude.

At night I seek the ordered vacant room
You hallowed with your beauty, love, and
cheer,
To find exemption there for every wrong;
Your clear courageous presence fills the gloom;
My heart uplifted knows that you are near,
And I go from you comforted and strong.

The Gulf Stream

AN isle there is that breasts assaulting
seas

In latitudes of icy Labrador,
Around which deep Atlantic currents pour
Warm waters streaming from beyond the
keys

Of Florida, to make the English leas,
Full fields and gardens linked from shore
to shore,

With breed of stubborn men who gather
more

Than yield the lands of palm and olive trees.

So flowed your love around my selfishness,
With such effects as had they holier source,
And wrought its miracles with patient skill;
It flattered as a tempered air's caress
When all essaying nature has recourse
To mien urbane, wherewith to work its will.

Triumph

IF death conclusive is, the term of all
We think we are, is life then but a jest?
Or is it justified if we may wrest
From death the dignity however small
Of standing unafraid against a wall
To be shot down at destiny's behest,
Not sure but hoping we have sought the
best
And answered as we should at duty's call?

Not such a meagre triumph yours in death
Which but material things disintegrates,
And has no power to touch a deed achieved.
Let pass, a last thin sigh, your latest breath—
Remains the Heaven a soul by faith creates,
When action sorts with every good conceived.

The Blind Man

AS one struck blind between the dusk
and dawn,

To whom the first succeeding days
appear

But night prolonged—nor wholly void of
cheer

Because of friends a little closer drawn

And services of quick compassion born,

So was it when the parting still was near,

When death's finality extinguished fear,

And I was left bereaved but not forlorn.

But later, when the blind man sits alone

Through leaden hours of dull recurring days,
He counts his loss and longs for night and
sleep;

So now I reckon what was once my own,

The riches of your golden love appraise,
And know the lost was all I cared to keep.

The Ferment

WHEN I consider how your love pre-
vailed

Within the compass of the field you
tilled;

With fruits delectable your garden filled,
That never any guest went unregaled,
And made an Eden evil scarce assailed,
As harbinger of what of old was willed
For restless men when greedy lusts are
stilled,

I see the good estates to men entailed.

Transcendent souls are God's persistent yeast,
A constant ferment in the monstrous mass,
Which slowly shall be leavened through and
through,

Until—outgrown the snatchings of the beast—
Is seen, as brute predispositions pass,
How Christ was wiser than the wisest knew.

Our Little System's Sun

O H, golden heart, our little system's sun,
So prodigal of life's essential need,
The love which quickens as it sows
the seed

For harvests only by its nurture won!

Oh, heart of gold, through all our courses run
In errant paths we could not choose but
heed

The binding law the greater love decreed,
That ever its benignant will be done.

Dear vivifying light which gave release

To latent good inert in under gloom,
Your alchemy transmuted undenied.

Within your house was pale of lasting peace.

A trysting place became your tranquil
room,

Where hearts were eased and souls were
satisfied.

Recollections

AS grateful as thick links of ductile gold
Wrenched from a feudal seignior's
cincture chain,
To thud in palm where seldom gold had
lain,
As guerdon for a tale supremely told;
Delicious as the honeyed sequence rolled
In throat of wood thrush, whose infrequent
strain
Falls as the first big drops of tardy rain,
Which comes to succor thirsting woods and
wold—

No moments I recall as sweeter far,
Nor can I summon fit similitudes
For more emotion than accrues by sense;
Each precious memory stands out a star
Against the desolating dark which broods
As customary night since you went hence.

Leonardo

GOD must have loved that Leonardo
whose

Report bespeaks an intellect as clear
And balanced as a shining crystal sphere;
Who never ceased to follow nature's clues,
And all discovered as a master use,
That in his art her touch should reappear;
Whose dateless youth forbade an age austere,
And let not avarice his soul confuse.

Your quest was not of nature's occult ways
Nor more of subtleties germain to art,
Yet you like Leonardo were too fine
To disregard the depths beyond the phase;
As he knew nature so you knew the heart,
And lanterns to our feet your spirits shine.

The Dispossessed

O HEART of me that death hath plucked
away,
To leave an habitation's empty shell!
Where dearest presences were wont to dwell
But cheerless solitudes the soul dismay,
As though a dispossessed alone should stray
Through cloisters tenantless, where yet the
spell
Of sanctity in every vacant cell,
Recalls too cruelly another day.

My loss is love whose date was ever spring;
A later beauty matching beauty's bloom,
And harmonies but mated souls reveal.
Now these my precious memories I bring
As garlands for my heart's relentless tomb,
Which love can consecrate but not unseal.

Converse of the Night

DEAR heart, when I in converse of the
night,
With all an old man's memories,
recall

Life's veiled vicissitudes, how they befell,
As some by fate, yet never any quite
Without connivance of the shaping right
We exercise through will, which touches all,
I see how we to ill ourselves enthrall
And waste our happiness in God's despite.

You gave no latitude to evil's sway;
Conserving freedom and discerning good,
You walked in gaiety the paths of peace,
As high sincerity and courage may,
When amplest liberty is understood
As self's surrender for the soul's release.

The Disappearing Dead

WHEN all is weighed, and faith's assertion urged
To uttermost, the disappearing dead
Remain as never-heard-from ships, whose
bed
Is ocean's floor, a downward league submerged.
The poignant grief in stricken hearts that
surged
May age to irresilience of lead,
Yet by no sign the soul that craves be fed
Although of less desires by famine purged.

How little count my fortune's bettered state;
That once insistent cares have ceased to
fret;
That I your sowing harvest day by day.
Unshared by you all bounties come too late;
Denied my vanished best, can I forget
That death has torn the heart of joy away?

Your Losses

IS SORROW not so much for loss sustained,
Lost vision of your love-illumined face,
The hopeless absence or the vacant place,
All good less good and erring less restrained,
Depletion everywhere and naught regained,
As for your losses—you who culled a grace
From every aspect, knew in each to trace
A thought divine in any guise that feigned.

It flowered for you, the rose of happiness,
In hues as frank as signally refined—
By tillage wise life's tenure made worth while.
Should I assume your pleasures now are less
Because I can not limn the mystic lined
Escutcheon of your present rank and style?

To Think of It!

TO think of it!—to triumph all the way
Through life's adventure, winning
hearts at will,

And with accruing years possessing still
A zest for never failing charm at play
Seducing confidence, and making gay
The little world your presence seemed to fill
With fragrance only blooms of grace distil
And harmonies that never went astray!

And yet your habits all were dutiful;
You ever strove to turn the edge of wrong
And make appear the surer strength of right,
So all our memories are beautiful,
And reassuring as a faultless song
Which floats on silence of a sleepless night.

The Signals of the Dead

LAST night a firefly flashed its lantern
 small,
With intermitting gleams which puls-
 ing flung
Soft phosphorescent beams from where it
 hung
On solid darkness of my chamber wall,
As ships at night to one another call;
And, watching it, came fantasies which
 clung
Insistently, while intuitions sung
Of things by vision known or not at all.

We used to read how Roecus, flushed with
 wine,
Beat off his dryad's monitory bee,
And learned too late how souls are vision fed.
Had not I learned that living star of mine
 Was flashing messages from you to me,
Could I construe the signals of the dead?

Had I—

HAD I the eastern mystic's soul profound;
The gifts that made the Greeks so
 subtly great;

The massive power which built the Roman
 state;

Could I see whole all learning's spacious round
And sift for fruitful use the monstrous mound
 Of scholarship, so might I then create
 A masterpiece, supreme, immaculate,
As witness of my love's sufficient ground.

Not less your excellence because my skill
 Inadequate in limitation stands,
Nor less the love which proved a spirit's stay.
That I unable have such hunger still
 To satisfy that love's unstilled demands
Should my incompetence in part outweigh.

Naught Counts the Calendar

A YEAR has passed—in computation less
Compared to time's eternal flux of
years
Than staunchest manhood's scant reluctant
tears
To all the waters of the sea's excess
In nameless worlds whose numbers none assess;
And yet one devastating moment sears
To ash life's patient work, and disappears
The weave of wisdom, joy and tenderness.

Naught counts the calendar; but yesterday
Grew cold in mine your dear caressing
hand;
Or has there passed since then an endless age?
In questioning but grows the soul's dismay;
Hope lies in what we cannot understand,
As only dreams our holy griefs assuage.

Your Grave

A LOCUST tall and wide magnolia shade
The turf about your grave, and on the
grey

Engraven stone transparent shadows play,
As there these sonnets sedulously made
I say to you as though the body laid
Beneath our wreaths with all death took
away

Were re-endowed, death daring not gainsay
Our love, nor you from harkening dissuade.

How else my isolation make appear
Less absolute? The years of confidence
Which so responsive made our spirits twain,
Admit of no appeal to one less dear.

The better things to which I make pretence
Are told to you or else unsaid remain.

At the End

IF at the end extinction clears the score,
Let death deliver me from gross disgrace,
As mocked by faiths finalities erase
And shamed by troublings the Gods ignore.
Should death as constable lead me before
The fount of Justice—so I see that face
I quarrel not with my allotted place
Though I my registry must needs deplore.

Your faith admitted not of doubt or fear;
I only know, should I as I persist,
A large adventure waits. I challenge it,
But ask that when the herald's call I hear
My needs shall courage of today enlist,
That I go firmly as the Gods permit.

Winchester

AT Winchester, that high and holy fane,
Wherein a living faith devoutly
wrought

In lavish imagery its flowered thought,
The prodigalities superb attain
To ecstasy in jubilant refrain;
In perpetuity have fervor caught,
And certified the sacred thing it sought
As verity and all beside as vain.

Had you been with me in the silent choir,
That age old carven chrysalis of prayer;
Could hand and eye have met without a word,
Would not the immemorial altar fire
And all availing faith as witnessed there
Have moved me so our visions had concurred?

Justice

LET me not boast that I on justice lean
My sorry cause, for how can I conceive
The absolute, admitting no reprieve
For culprits too untaught to judge between
Affections, and perfections dimly seen?
So fallible by blood, can we believe
We may not losses of the soul retrieve;
That grace and pity shall not intervene?

Assenting not, but here we know not why;
For errors whipped, our dole of pleasures
small,
May we not plead—not our affair our fate?
Brave heart, I could not so your faiths deny,
For I should lose you then beyond recall,
Should I your sanctities so desecrate.

The Caviare

WHEN wheaten bread's abundance
faileth not
And purest waters run to waste
away,
We crave the caviare and ask array
Of dainties with concocted liquors hot:
But when in deserts wide the waters rot
And drought bakes failing bread as firing
clay,
Then wholesome loaves and waters sweet
we say
Were worth whatever else a man has got.

I knew the restlessness of strange desires,
Which, heedless of the soul's essential need,
I entertained, if only to disown;
But now I know the food that love requires,
As other wants before one want recede,
To leave me ever longing and alone.

Anticipation

NOT peace I came to send; I send a
sword—

So spoke a perspicacity too fine
To misconceive the catholic design.
It knew we combatants can not afford,
Until is won the battle of the Lord,
Repose or peace whose ease would under-
mine
The vigor needed in the fighting line—
Knew but the ultimate can bring accord.

Yet you discerned the ultimate, and caught
A glimpse of glory of fruition born,
Dayspring of futures indeterminate
Touching the heights whereon your spirit
sought
The peace and splendor of the final morn,
Which only souls like yours anticipate.

June

IN quietude I let June's excellence
Pervade my being's texture through and
through—

The canopy of sky, veiled, faintly blue,
Staid stems of trees, a verdure clean and dense,
The honeysuckle over bank and fence,
A humming bird too delicate to view
Without believing all of elves as true,
The blindness ours through sheer incom-
petence.

And then I wonder—what of you today?

And how the marvels of your world compare
With these our meeting eyes enhanced, as
when

We marked each beauty all along the way,
The old and new revealed, nor thought to
dare

Mistrust that more awaits than moved us then.

The Kindred Stars

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I TRIUMPH over time because endures
More juvenile the love death could not
kill;

The years undone destroy not but fulfill,
And love perfected as time's toll inures.

This fee a grace to wash the soul ensures—

To mend the imperfections of the will
And discipline the inner eye until
Lo, new perception old infection cures.

So love potential grown, and faith that holds

My God as merciful, sustain my soul
And penetrate the dusk which gathers fast.
When soon the deep engulfing dark enfolds,

Let blaze these kindred stars, the vital
whole

Of else a best obliterated past.

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